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THE PASSION OF S. PERPETUA

The Passion of S. Perpetua

An English Translation with Introduction and Notes

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PREFACE

In the following pages the reader is presented with an English translation of the most beautiful as well as the most undisputed of all early Christian martyr-records. Mgr. Duchesne considers it to be " one of the gems of early Christian literature."[1] The value of the Passion of S. Perpetua not only lies in the fact that as an historical document it throws especial light upon the circumstances under which early Christian martyrdoms took place, but also in that it reveals in a series of Visions the spiritual beauty of the unseen world. In addition, it contains some interesting Liturgical allusions, namely:—The Good Shepherd appears,

[1] *The Early History of the Christian Church* (Eng. Ed.) 1909, i, p. 288. Dr. Sanday, *Minor Holy Days*, p. 4, considers that the account of S. Perpetua's life and death forms one of the most touching and beautiful narratives ever written.

milking His sheep, and gives Perpetua "from the cheese as it were a little cake" (*quasi buccellam*). She receives it with joined hands, while those around say "Amen" (chapter iv). The kiss of peace is given (chapter x), and the *Ter Sanctus* is sung in the Greek form, "*Agios, Agios, Agios*" (chapter xii). It is my hope that this book may not only instruct and interest, but that it may serve to stimulate its readers to a more ardent devotion to Jesus Christ, for whom the martyrs suffered.

This translation has been made from Dr. Armitage Robinson's edition of the Passion of S. Perpetua, *Texts and Studies* i, 2 (Camb. 1891). I am much indebted to Dr. Robinson for his valuable Introduction and notes.

R. W. M.

March 1927.

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INTRODUCTION

I. *Date and place of Martyrdom of S. Perpetua and her companions*

SS. PERPETUA[1] and Felicitas suffered on 7th March, 203 A.D., at Carthage, together with their companions, Revocatus, Saturninus and Secundulus, who were catechumens. Their number was increased shortly after by the voluntary surrender of Saturus the deacon, who was absent when the law was first set in motion against them; but it was diminished before the games by the death of Secundulus in prison, as often happened with early Christian martyrs. Perpetua and her fellow martyrs were among the first victims of the persecution of Septimius Severus. In the original Latin Passion

[1] The name Perpetua occurs only once among African Inscriptions, *Corp. Inscr. Lat.* viii, 1018. Her full name was Vibia Perpetua (see chapter ii).

of S. Perpetua, as contained in the Monte Cassino Codex, no locality whatever is assigned to the martyrs. But this is quite natural in a contemporary document which was intended for the use of the African Church, especially if the martyrs belonged to Carthage and suffered there. The omission in itself seems to suggest that they were Carthaginians.

SS. Perpetua and Felicitas are mentioned in the old Roman Calendar[1]: Nonis Martii, Perpetuae et Felicitatis Africae. In Prosper's *Chronicon* (Migne *P.L.* li. 566), under the head of the Fifth Persecution in the time of Severus, we find: Qua tempestate Perpetua et Felicitas pro Christo passae sunt nonis Martii, apud Carthaginen Africae in castris bestiis deputatae Antonino II, et Geta—compare also *Analecta Bolland* ii, 16, where in the Martyrol. Trevirense, we find th

[1] The Philocalian Calendar, named after its author, Philocalus. It is also called Liberian, since it was compiled in 354 A.D. under Pope Liberius.

following entry: [Non] Mar. Africa passio Perpetuae. Felicitatis. Saturi.

The Syriac Martyrology published by Dr. Wright[1] from the old Nitrian MS. in the British Museum gives the following entry: Adār (March) 7. In Africa; of the number of the ancients, Perpetua, Saturninus (MS. Saturnilus), and ten other Confessors. The old Carthaginian Calendar, discovered by Mabillon,[2] begins with "xii Kal. Maias" and ends with "xiiii Kal. Mart"; so that the names of March are not given in it. Mabillon explains that during Lent no such festivals were observed in the African Church. Ruinart thinks that the whole of the Calendar has not been handed down to us.[3]

Apparently the Thuburbitan Martyrs have been identified with our martyrs.

[1] *Journ. of Sacr. Lit.*, vol. viii, N.S., pp. 45-56, 423-432.

[2] *Vetera Analecta*, iii, 378. The Calendar, with notes, is given by Münter. *Prim. Eccl. Afr.*, pp. 251 qq.

[3] The Greek day of the Commemoration is now the first of February.

We find in a short Roman Martyrology the following entry: Nonis Martii, In Mauritania ciuitate Tuburbitanorum SS. Martyrum Perpetuae et Felicitatis. The Hieronymian *Martyrology* (*ex Cod. Bernensi*) has: In Mauritania Turpitanorum passio SS. Perpetuae et Felicitatis. In the Roman Martyrology published by Gelesinius (Hols., p. 74) we have as the locality "Thuburbae in Mauritania," and as the date "Valeriano et Galieno imperatoribus." The same confusion occurs in the Short Latin Acts of S. Perpetua and in the Greek version of the Long Latin. The old Carthaginian Calendar gives the following entry: iii Kal. Ag. Sanctarum Tuburbitanarum et Septimiae. And in Ado's Roman Martyrology under the same date (July 30th) giving the names of the Thuburbitan Martyrs: Maxima, Donatilla and Secunda, and they suffered under Anulinus in the persecution of Gallienus. It is interesting to notice that S. Augustine speaks of the festival of the

Thuburbitan Martyrs, but he does not mention their names in a sermon, *De Contemptu Mundi* (ed. Ben. v, 1,338, note b), first published by Sirmondi. Although S. Augustine does not connect S. Perpetua and her companions with Thuburbo, yet Sirmondi identified the Thuburbitan Martyrs with them. Possibly this mistake was made before this, and may have been the origin of the whole confusion.

Dr. Armitage Robinson[1] discusses this point at length, and in conclusion he says: "Another consideration which may shake our belief in the assignment of our martyrs to Thuburbo is the frequently repeated phrase, 'Mauritania in ciuitate Tuburbitanarum.' For although there are two towns in proconsular Africa within a radius of forty miles from Carthage called respectively Thuburbo Maius and Thuburbo Minus, we have no evidence of any town of that name in the Mauritanian

[1] *Texts and Studies*, i, 2, p. 26.

district. So that we may regard the whole statement as probably the fiction of a later date."

The bodies of SS. Felicitas and Perpetua were placed in a tomb at Carthage. A magnificent basilica was afterwards erected over their tomb, the Basilica Maiorum. Victor Vitensis mentions this in his work, *Hist. Persecut. Afric.* i, 3: et ut de necessariis loquar, basilicam maiorem ubi corpora sanctarum martyrum Perpetuae atque Felicitatis sepultâ sunt.

That the tomb was indeed in this basilica has been proved by Père Delattre,[1] who has discovered three ancient inscriptions bearing the names of the martyrs. He gives a description of the Basilica Maiorum, together with plates showing the tomb of SS. Perpetua and Felicitas, the Basilica and fragments of the Inscriptions. From the description given by

[1] *La Basilica Maiorum, tombeau des SS. Perpétue et Félicité* in *Comptes-rendus de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres* (1907), pp. 516-531.

Père Delattre, apparently the basilica had nine naves like the Basilica Damour-el-Karita (in Algeria), the whole extent was used for burials. Everywhere, at over a depth of $3\frac{1}{2}$ feet, were to be found skeletons and bones. In the middle of the central nave there was a small Confessional Chapel, with an apse facing a square recess (3 feet each side). This Chapel was paved in mosaic of which two parts still remain.

S. Augustine has three sermons (*Sermones* cclxxx-cclxxxii) for the Festival of SS. Perpetua and Felicitas. In one of them he makes the happy allusion—*Perpetua et Felicitas perpetua felicitate floruerunt*—" Perpetua and Felicitas have blossomed in perpetual felicity " (*Sermo* cclxxx). We learn from S. Augustine that their Passion was read in the Churches of Africa on their commemoration day[1]

[1] S. Perpetua is commemorated in the English Calendar on March 7, and in the Sarum Breviary (ed. Procter and Wordsworth, fasc. iii, col. 205) there is a prayer with lections from the Shorter Latin Acts of the Passion.

(*Sermo* cclxxxii, 2). The Third Council of Carthage, Can. xlvii, in 397 A.D., sanctioned the public reading of the Acts of the Martyrs in churches on their anniversary days.

Evidently authentic records were scarce even in favoured Africa, for S. Augustine says (*Sermo* cccxv): "While we can hardly find any *gesta*[1] of the other martyrs which we can read on their festivals, the Passion of this saint (Stephen) is in a canonical book."

[1] The word *Gesta* (deeds) was applied, from the fifth century onwards, to the lives of the Martyrs, as well as the older words *Acta* (for a document presumably based on the *Acta Proconsularia*), *Passiones*, *Vitae*.

II. *Authorship of the Visions and the rest of the Martyrdom*

We possess, in addition to the original Latin, the text of an ancient Greek version, and a second considerably shorter Latin text which is notably a later excerpt. It seems to be the general opinion now that the Latin text is the original. However, Mr. Rendel Harris, the discoverer of the Greek form, has endeavoured to prove that it is the original and that the Latin is a translation made half a century later. But we should naturally expect that the account of Martyrdoms of a Latin Church would be written in the Latin language. Moreover, in the Vision of Saturus (chapter xiii) it is expressly stated that Perpetua talked in Greek with the bishop and presbyter outside the heavenly gate. It would be difficult to explain such a notice if the original document was com-

posed in the Greek language. On the othe hand it is quite natural if it was written i Latin.

Dr. Robinson believes the Latin versio to be the original of the Greek trans lation, and he states that he now has M Harris's authority to say that he has see reason to change his view of the matte and to regard the Latin as the original P. Franchi de' Cavalieri, in the introduc tion to his edition of the Passion of S Perpetua, in 1896, at Rome, has exhibite the evidence in favour of the priority the Latin text.

The author of the Passion of S. Pe petua distinctly states that Perpetu and her companion Saturus wrote t account of their own visions, and that h himself, an eye-witness, added the sto of the Martyrdom. This statement h been accepted as true, and Dr. Robinso distinguishes the difference of style b tween the writer of the Visions and t

[1] *Texts and Studies*, i, 2, p. 2 sqq.

redactor who edits them and supplements them with an account of the actual Martyrdom. It has been frequently suggested that there is some relation between Tertullian and the author of the Passion of S. Perpetua. Tertullian certainly knew the work, as he refers to the Vision of Perpetua in *De Anima* lv. Dr. Robinson[1] has examined the scriptural quotations and has brought together the parallels of thought and diction between our author and Tertullian, and he conjectures that Tertullian himself may have been the author. He says: "I cherish the hope that I have done enough to render it in the highest degree probable that we have in this beautiful Martyrdom a genuine addition to the hitherto recognized works of the great master. It is hard to force oneself to imagine another such writer, living at the same time and in the same Church, filled with the same Montanistic fervour, delighting in the same legal

[1] *Op. cit*, p. 47 sqq.

phraseology, able to wield the same passionate rhetoric to the same good purposes, even making the same confusion in his Scriptural quotations; who yet must be distinguished from Tertullian himself; and that, forsooth, only because tradition has assigned to him no name."

I do not propose to use much space in dwelling upon the old controversy as regards the Montanist character of the Acts. However, a few words must be said on this point. The question has been raised as to the opinions of the martyrs and of the compiler of the Acts, whether they are Montanist or Catholic. However it is quite clear that the martyrs had not separated from the Catholic Communion as they are attended by the deacons, according to custom. Again, when Saturus sees the bishop Optatus and the presbyter Aspasius in Paradise, where the bishop is reproved not for rejecting the Paraclete but for allowing his flock to walk in

disorderly manner, Cardinal Orsi[1] wrote a long dissertation to prove the orthodoxy of the martyrs, which Basnage had impugned. J. Tixeront, in his *History of Dogmas* i, p. 195 (1910), says: "The redactor of the Passion of S. Perpetua and Felicitas was certainly under the influences of the new prophecies. We could not say exactly when. From this, however, we should not infer that the martyrs were Montanists. It is urged that the preface utters Montanist sentiments, speaking of prophecies and visions as granted by the Spirit. Dr. Routh[2] lays down definitely that the author was a Montanist.

On the other hand, Ruinart,[3] commenting on the words in the Preface, says: 'It is true that these words at first sight

[1] *Dissertatio Apologetica pro SS. Perpetuae, Felicitatis et sociorum Martyrum orthodoxia* (Florence 1728), reprinted in Migne P.L. iii, 61 sqq.
[2] *Reliq. Sac.*, i, 455.
[3] Prolegomena *Acta SS. Perpetuae et Felicitatis: Acta Martyrum*, p. 135 (Ratisbon 1859).

seem to savour of the errors of Montanus but yet if they are a little more accurately considered you will find nothing contained in them except what is orthodox and plainly in agreement with the Catholic faith. For this author does not compare these latest visions with the canonical Scriptures, as Valesius thought, but only with the visions and revelations of the early martyrs; and he asserts that those of his own time are to be held in no less veneration than those which happened in early times, that is, in the first or second century of the Church."

Our latest critic, Dr. Robinson,[1] has pointed out that the distinctly Montanistic tone of the Martyrdom may be illustrated by two facts in the history of its transmission: (1) The Greek translator has shown carefully modified passages which he regarded as unsatisfactory on this ground; and especially the closing section of the piece. (2) Both Cod. Salis-

[1] *Texts and Studies*, i, 2, p. 51.

urg. and Cod. Compend. have omitted
ne whole of the Preface, and the Short
atin recension has nothing to correspond
o it at all.

The question as to the Montanistic
haracter of the Martyrdom is un-
oubtedly a disputable one, however. I
ish to point out that even if Montanistic
endencies may be detected, this would
ot in any way deprive the work of its
eauty or value as an historical document
n throwing light upon the circumstances
nder which early Christian martyrdoms
ook place.

III. *Editions and MSS.*

The Latin version was discovered and edited by L. Holsten, Rome, 1663. The following year it was edited by H. Valesius at Paris. Thomas Spark included it in his edition of Lactantius, *Lactantii de Mortibus persecutionem accesserunt Passio SS. Perpetuae, etc.*, Oxford 1680. It was embodied in Ruinart, *Acta sincera Martyrum* (Ratisbon 1859), p. 146 sqq., and in *Acta SS. Boll. Mart.* i (1887), p. 630.

The Shorter Latin Acts were edited by B. Aubé in 1881. In 1890, at Cambridge, the Greek version was edited by J. Rendel Harris and Seth K. Gifford. The best edition of all three texts is edited by J. A. Robinson in *Texts and Studies* i, 2, Cambridge 1891. In 1891 there was an edition of the Greek and Latin texts by P. Franchi de' Cavalieri at Rome.

The Passion of S. Perpetua may be seen also in F. Münter, *Primordia Ecclesiae Africanae*, 1829, p. 226, and Migne, *Patrologia Latina* iii, 13 sqq.

I will now give a short account of the MSS. of the Passion of S. Perpetua; for which I am indebted to Dr. Armitage Robinson, *Texts and Studies* i, 2, p. 10 sqq.

1. CODEX CASINENSIS (A). In the Bibliotheca Casinensis (vol. iv, cod. 204) this MS. is described as coming at the end of an eleventh-century MS. of St. Cyprian, and being itself written in a twelfth-century hand. But at the end of the description of one part of the MS., the same catalogue speaks of it as "*quod uidetur xi paeculo*," and this latter judgment coincides with the view of the present Archivist, Dom Ambrogio Amelli. The Martyrdom has no title, but commences at once with the words: Si uetera idei exempla (If ancient examples of

faith); this is the only Latin authority fo the important opening section. Holsten's edition was entirely dependent on thi MS. It was collated by Dr. Armitag Robinson in September 1890.

2. CODEX COMPENDIENSIS (B) This MS. was used to some extent b Ruinart; however, his witness seems t have been incomplete and often inac curate. The MS. at that time belonged t the Abbey of Compiègne. It is now in th Bibliothèque Nationale at Paris (fond Latin, 17,626). It is assigned to the tent century. The opening words are: INCIP IT PASSIO SCAE FELICITATIS E PERPETVAE. Revocatus et felicita conserua eius. Dr. Robinson says of thi MS.: "Generally speaking, the conditio of the text is far inferior to that of th Codex Casinensis. But it fills up som serious blanks of that Codex."

3. CODEX SALISBURGENSIS, c SARISBURIENSIS (C). Apparentl this MS. has been lost—Dr. Robinson ha

searched for it in vain. Ruinart adopted readings from it. In the edition of the Martyrdom published at Oxford in 1680, Holsten's text is used, with corrections and various readings from a MS. spoken of as Codex Sarisburiensis. Dr. Robinson says: "It is evident from a comparison of these readings with those given by Ruinart that Cod. Sarisburiensis bears the closest relation to Cod. Salisburgensis; indeed, they are almost certainly one and the same. A confusion has arisen between Salisbury and Salzburg: but who has made the mistake we cannot say. The Catalogue of the Cathedral MSS. at Salisbury, made by Mr. Maunde Thompson, now Librarian of the British Museum, contains no mention of such a MS., and Mr. H. J. White, who kindly made enquiry for me on the spot, can learn nothing of it. At present, therefore, we have to content ourselves with the testimony of the Oxford Edition, supplemented by the notices in Ruinart. But,

fortunately, these suffice to give us a fai
conception of the MS., and to show it
close relation to Codex Compendiensis.

4. The Greek text is taken from a MS
in the library of the Convent of the Hol
Sepulchre (Cod. S. Sep 1). The MS
contains *βίοι καὶ μαρτυρίαι* for the mont
of February. It is labelled with the nam
of Symeon Metaphrastes, but inasmuc
as the writing is of the tenth century a
least, the title must not be taken literally
This Codex contains also the Martyrdo
of Polycarp, the life of Porphry of Gaz
and Hippolytus, *De Christo et Antichrist*

THE PASSION OF S. PERPETUA

The Passion of S. Perpetua

I. If ancient examples of faith and proofs of God's grace and deeds edifying to men have on that account been committed to writing, so that by the reading of them it made them once more present, both God is honoured and man is strengthened, why should not modern instances also be collected which are equally suitable for both purposes? Surely equally with these those ancient examples were destined sometime to be, and were necessary for those who came after, although in their own age they were deemed of less importance, on account of the veneration which is given to that which is old. But away with those who determine the one power of the one Holy Spirit according to the times and seasons; since all latter deeds must be regarded as the greater, as being later than the last, in accordance

with the exuberance of the grace promised in the last age of the world.

For " in the last days, saith the Lord I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh, and their sons and daughters shall prophesy; and upon my servants and handmaids will I pour out of my Spirit and young men shall see visions and old men shall dream dreams " (Acts ii, 17). Consequently, we who both acknowledge and honour equally the prophecies and the new visions which were alike promised, consider the other powers of the Holy Spirit to be for the equipment of the Church, to whom He has been sent administering all gifts to all, according as the Lord hath distributed to each, and we both naturally collect them, and proclaim them in public reading to the glory of God. Thus we prevent any weakness or despondency of faith, thinking that it was only with the ancients that divine grace was associated, whether in the glory of the martyrs or of revelations; when God

lways performs what He has promised, is a witness to unbelievers and as a benefit to believers. Therefore, brethren and little children, " We too announce to you what we have heard and handled " (1 John i, 1, 3), so that both you who were present may call again to mind the glory of the Lord, and you who now learn by the ear may " have communion with " (1 John i, 3) the holy martyrs, and through them with the Lord Jesus Christ, to Whom be glory and honour for ever and ever. Amen.

II. The young catechumens, Revocatus and Felicitas his fellow-slave, Saturninus and Secundulus, were arrested, and along with these, Vibia Perpetua, of noble birth and well educated, a wife and a mother.[1] She had a father and mother and two brothers, one of whom was also a catechumen, and an infant son at the breast. She was about twenty-two years of age.

[1] Lat. *Matrimonaliter nupta:* these words occur in an African Inscription (Willmann's *Corp. Inscr. Lat.*, viii, 870).

III. "From the time that I was with my companions my father not only wished to turn me from my purpose with arguments, but also persisted in trying to break down my faith through his affection for me. 'Father,' said I, 'do you see, for example, this vessel lying here—a jug, or whatever it is?' 'I see it,' said he. 'Can one call anything by any other name than what it is?' 'No,' said he. 'So neither can I call myself anything else than what I am, a Christian.' Then my father, provoked at this word, threw himself upon me, as if he would tear out my eyes; but he only shook me, and forthwith was overcome along with the devil's arguments. Then for a few days, because I missed my father, I gave thanks to the Lord and was refreshed by his absence. During that short space of time we were baptized; and the Spirit intimated to me that from my baptism nothing else was to be sought for than suffering in the flesh. After a few days we were received

nto the prison, and I was very much afraid because I had never experienced such gloom.[1] O terrible day! fearful heat arising from the crowd and from the ostling of the soldiers! Finally I was racked with anxiety for my infant there. Then Tertius and Pomponius, blessed deacons who were ministering to us,[2] arranged by bribery for us to go forth for a few hours and gain refreshment in a better part of the prison. And so going out of the dungeon we all were free to

[1] Describing a prison, Tertullian in his address, *Ad Martyres*, ii, says: "It is full of darkness, but ye yourselves are light (Matt. v, 14; Eph. v, 8); it has bonds, but God has made you free." Cf. also S. Cyprian, *Ep.* lxxxi.

[2] Cyprian refers to the custom of the Church sending deacons to administer to the spiritual needs of the martyrs in prison. *Ep.* xv. "It was the custom of our predecessors to send to the prisons deacons who saw to the needs of the martyrs, and read to them from Holy Scripture." The priest, Lucian, sends the subdeacon, Heremmianus, and the catechumen, Januarius, to some African martyrs in their prison to bring to each "the food which never diminishes" (*alimentum indeficiens*), i.e. the Eucharist (Passion of SS. Montanus and Lucius, Carthage, Feb. 24th, 259 A.D.).

attend to ourselves. I suckled my child who was already weak from want of nourishment. In my anxiety for him I spoke to my mother, and comforted my brother and commended to their care my son. And I pined excessively because I saw them pining away because of me. These anxieties I suffered for many days and I then obtained leave that my child should remain with me in the prison. Immediately I gained strength and being relieved from anxiety about the child and my prison suddenly became to me a palace, so that I preferred to be there rather than anywhere else.

IV. "Then my brother said to me, 'My lady sister, thou art already in such a position of dignity that thou mayest ask both for a vision that it may be shown thee whether we are to suffer or to be released.' And I who knew myself to be holding converse with the Lord,[1] for

[1] Compare *Ep. Smyrn.*, Ep. ii (Martyrdom of S. Polycarp). "Not one of them let cry or groan

whose sake I had experienced such great trials, faithfully promised him, saying, 'To-morrow I will tell thee.' And I prayed, and this vision was shown to me: I see a golden ladder of wondrous size reaching up to heaven; narrow, moreover, so that only one could go up it at once, and on its sides every kind of iron instrument fixed. There were swords, lances, hooks, and daggers; so that if one went up carelessly, or not concentrating one's attention upwards, one would be torn, and pieces of one's flesh would be left on the iron implements. There was also lying under the ladder itself a dragon of wondrous size, which laid snares for those climbing it, and frightened them from the ascent. Now Saturus went up

escape him; . . . the Lord standing by their side conversed with them." And *Ep. Vienn et Lugd:* "Alexander neither murmured nor groaned at all, but conversed with God in his heart." Ibid: S. Blandina: "And being no longer sensible of her sufferings on account of her hope and firm hold on the things entrusted to her and her converse with Christ."

first. He had given himself up voluntarily after our arrest on our account, because he had taught us the faith, and he had not been present on the occasion of our trial. When he had reached the top of the ladder he turned and said to me, 'Perpetua, I am waiting for you; but take care that that dragon does not bite you.' And I said, 'In the name of Jesus Christ he shall not hurt me.' And the dragon, as if afraid of me, slowly thrust his head underneath the ladder itself; and I trod upon his head[1] as if I were treading on the first step. And I went up and saw a large spac

[1] Reference is made to this in the *Acts of Polyeuctes* (Greek text): "For thou didst trample on the head of the serpent, even as did also the holy martyr Thekla and Perpetua, who ascended along that brazen ladder which led to heaven, until she reached her Saviour." (B. Aubé, *Polyeucte dans l'historie* 1882, p. 77).

The subject of the martyr having overcome the dragon, mounting to heaven by a ladder, is represented in a fresco in the catacomb of S. Callixtus (Wilpert, *Le pitture delle catacombe romane*, p. 445, pl. 553, 1910. Italian transl. from the German original).

of garden, and in the midst a man with white hair sitting, in the garb of a shepherd, tall, milking sheep;[1] and standing around were many thousand white-robed ones. And he raised his head, and looked upon me, and said to me, 'Welcome, child.' And he called me, and from the cheese as he was milking he gave me as it were a little cake, which I received with joined hands and ate; and all those around said Amen.[2] And at the sound of their

[1] The subject of our Lord represented as a Shepherd milking His flock, and other conceptions, almost identical, are also found in the Catacombs with an Eucharistic significance (See O. Marucchi, *Christian Epigraphy*, Cambridge 1912, p. 124).

[2] The Amen shows that Perpetua is describing the reception of the Eucharist. This is evident from the joined or crossed hands with which the fragment was received. Even in S. Paul's time the Eucharistic Amen was a prominent feature of the Service: the unlearned or private persons joined in it (1 Cor. xiv, 16). However, it is strange that the Amen should have been said by all around. Tertullian evidently refers to the custom of saying Amen at the reception of the Eucharist, when he asks a Christian who was accustomed to attend the public shows: *De Spectaculis* xxv: "For what manner of thing is it to go from the Church of God

voices I was awakened, still tasting
sweetness which I cannot describe. Th
vision I related at once to my brothe
and we understood that we were about t
suffer martyrdom, and we ceased hence
forth to have any hope in this world.

V. "After a few days a rumour ran roun
that our case was to be heard. Moreov
my father came up from the city, wor
out with disgust; and he came to brea
down my faith, saying, 'Daughter, pit
my grey hairs; pity your father, if I a
worthy to be called father by you, if
have brought you up with my own hand
to your present comely age, if I have pr
ferred you to all your brothers: do n
make me disgraced before men. Behol
your brothers; behold your mother an
your aunt; look at your son, who cann

into the Church of the devil? from the sky (as th
say) to the style? to weary afterward, in applaudi
a prayer, those hands, which thou hast lifted up
God? to give thy testimony for the gladiator out
the mouth with which thou hast uttered Amen
That Holy Thing?"

ive without you. After your determination: do not cut us off entirely; for not one of us will ever hold up his head again if anything happens to you.' This my father said out of his affection for me, kissing my hands, and throwing himself at my feet, and with tears calling me not 'daughter' but 'lady.'[1] And I was distressed at my father's state, for he alone of my kindred would not rejoice at my martyrdom. So I comforted him, saying, 'This will be done on that scaffold which God has willed: for know that we have not been placed in our own power but in God's.' And he left me very sorrowfully."

VI. "On another day, while we were at dinner, we were suddenly taken away for our trial, and we arrived at the forum. The rumour of it immediately spread through the neighbourhood and an immense crowd gathered. We go up into the

[1] This title of respect is given to brothers and sons in funeral inscriptions: e.g. *Corp. Inscr. Lat.* viii (African volume) 333, Domino meo Fratri, and 2,862, Filio et Domino meo.

dock. The others when questioned con-
fessed. Then my turn came. And m
father appeared on the scene with m
boy, and drew me down from the step
praying to me, 'Pity thy child.' Ther
Hilarian the procurator, who at that tim
was administering the government i
place of the proconsul Minucius Timi
nianus,[1] deceased, said, 'Spare thy father'

[1] Hilarian is deputy for a defunct proconsu
whose name is given in the Latin as Minuciu
Timinianus, and in the Greek as Minucius Op
pianus. I will quote Mr. Harris's comment on th
names: "Neither of these names has the right rin
about it. We can find in Latin, Minianus, Mu
cianus, and the like, but not, I think, Timinianus
And the Greek form must either stand for Ap
pianus or be a corruption for some more remot
name. It is conceivable that Oppianus may stan
for Apronianus, who was consul in 190; or pe
haps Septimianus might be the origin of both th
names in question. Unfortunately we cannot fin
that either of these was a Minucius. Septimianus
found written with various additional names in th
inscriptions; sometimes M. Patronius Septimianu
and sometimes M. Sura Septimianus, so that h
complete name should be M. Petronius Se
timianus. If either of these was the correct consul
the Acts we should have to look for the martyrdo
about A.D. 203." (*Acts of Perpetua and Felicitas*, p.

grey hairs; spare thy infant boy. Sacrifice for the safety of the Emperor.' And I replied, 'I do not sacrifice.' 'Art thou a Christian?' asked Hilarian; and I said, 'I am.' And when my father persisted in endeavouring to make me recant, he was ordered down by Hilarian and beaten with a rod. And I felt it as keenly as though I had been struck myself; and I was sorry for his miserable old age.

"Then he pronounced sentence against us all, and condemned us to the beasts; and we joyfully went down to the prison. Then, because my child had been accustomed to be suckled by me and to remain with me in prison, I sent Pomponius the deacon immediately to my father for the child, but he refused to give it up. And somehow God willed it that neither the child any longer desired the breasts, nor did they cause me pain; and thus I was spared anxiety about the child and personal discomfort."

VII. "After a few days, whilst we were

all praying, on a sudden, in the middle o
our prayer, there came to me a word, and
I named Dinocrates; and I was amazed
that that name had never come into my
mind until then, and I was grieved as
remembered his misfortune. And I fel
myself immediately to be worthy, and t
be called on to pray on his behalf. I bega
to make earnest supplication for him, and
to cry with groaning to the Lord. Withou
delay on that very night, this was show
to me in a vision. I saw Dinocrates goin
out from a gloomy place where also ther
were several others, and he was parche
and very thirsty, with a filthy countenanc
and pallid colour, and the wound on hi
face which he had when he died. Thi
Dinocrates had been my brother after th
flesh, seven years of age, who died misera
ably with disease—his face being so eate
out with cancer that his death caused re
pugnance to all men. For him I had mad
my prayer, and between him and me ther
was a great gulf, so that neither of u

could approach the other. And moreover, in the same place where Dinocrates was, there was a font[1] filled with water, having its brink higher than was the stature of the boy; and Dinocrates raised himself up as if to drink. And I was grieved that, although that font held water, still, on account of the height of its brink, he could not drink. And I was aroused, and knew that my brother was in suffering. But I trusted that my prayer would bring help to his suffering; and I prayed for him

[1] Lat. *piscina* in its ecclesiastical use at once suggests a baptismal font, and although the boy is represented as anxious to quench his thirst this does not prevent us from interpreting his real need of baptism. The boy had no doubt died unbaptized, and this was the cause of his appearing to be in a place of torment. S. Augustine, in *The Origin of the Soul*, i, 10; iii, 9, discusses the vision at length and states that Dinocrates was suffering from sin committed after baptism. However, it seems most unlikely that in a pagan household a boy of seven years of age should have been baptized, even if his sister was a Christian at the time of his death; and of this we have no evidence whatever: indeed she was probably a recent convert, and was only a catechumen at the time of her arrest (Dr. Robinson, *Texts and Studies*, 1, 2, p. 29).

every day until we passed over into the prison of the camp, for we were to fight in the camp-show. Then was the birthday of Geta Caesar, and I made my prayer for my brother day and night,[1] groaning and weeping that he might be granted to me.

VIII. "Then on the day on which we remained in fetters, this was shown to me. I saw that that place which I had formerly observed to be in gloom was now bright; and Dinocrates, with a clean body well clad, was finding refreshment. And where there had been a wound I saw a scar; and that water which I had before seen (I saw now) with its margin lowered even to the boy's waist. And water was being drawn from the font continually, and upon its brink was a goblet filled with water; and Dinocrates drew near and began to drink from it, and the goblet did

[1] It is at Carthage that prayers and offerings for the departed are first seen to take a recognized place in the services of the Church. Tertullian, *De Corona Militis* iii; *De Exhortatione Castitatis* xi, and *De Monogamiax*.

not fail. And when he was satisfied he went away from the water to play joyously after the manner of children, and I awoke. Then I understood that he had been removed from the place of pain.

IX. "Again, after a few days, Pudens,[1] a soldier, an assistant overseer of the prison, who began to regard us in great esteem, perceiving that the great power of God was in us, admitted many brethren to see us, that both we and they might be mutually refreshed. And when the day of the exhibition drew near, my father, worn out with suffering, came in to see me, and began to tear out his beard, and to throw himself on the earth, and to cast himself down on his face, and to reproach his years, and to utter such words as might move all creation. I grieved for his unhappy old age.

[1] Allard believes this soldier to be identical with Pudens the martyr, who subsequently suffered as a Christian in one of the numerous persecutions of that period at Carthage. (*Hist. des Persécutions* iii, chapter iii, p. 130).

X. "The day before that on which we were to fight, I saw in a vision that Pomponius the deacon came hither to the gate of the prison, and knocked vehemently. I went out to him, and opened the gate for him; and he was clothed in a loose white robe, and wore manifold shoes.[1] And he said to me, 'Perpetua, we are waiting for you; come.' And he took my hand, and we began to traverse rough and winding passages. At last with difficulty we arrive panting at the amphitheatre, and he led me into the middle of the arena and said to me, 'Fear not, I will be here with thee, and will assist thee.'[2]

[1] Lat. *multiplices galliculas*. Cod. Compendiensis adds the words "of gold and silver." Cf. The "white shoes" of the Church when she appears to Hermas after his escape from the Beast. (Vis. IV, 2, 1).

[2] With these words compare the promise of the Angel of Repentance to Hermas. "Fear ye not the devil, for there is no power in him against you: for I will be with you. . . . The devil can wrestle against you, but wrestle you down he cannot." (Mand. xii, 4, 6, 7 and 5, 2.)

And he departed. And I beheld a vast crowd eagerly watching. And because I knew that I was to be given to the beasts, I wondered why the beasts were not sent to me. Then there came forth against me a certain Egyptian,[1] horrible in appearance, along with his assistants, ready to fight with me. There came also to me comely young men as my assistants and helpers. I was smoothed down and changed my sex. And they began to rub me down with oil as is customary for a contest. And I saw that Egyptian opposite rolling in the dust. And a certain man came forth, of wondrous size, whose height was greater than the amphitheatre,[2] wearing a loose purple robe with two broad stripes over the middle of his

[1] Here we have distinct reminiscences of Gen. iii: the conflict between the woman and the serpent. We may combine with this the appearance of the devil in the first vision as a dragon "which laid snares for those climbing the ladder."

[2] This finds a parallel in Hermas Sim. ix, 6, 1, where we have a man of lofty structure, overtopping the tower, surrounded by others who are "glorious."

breast, and embroidered shoes wrough
of gold and silver. He carried a rod like
fencing-master, and a green branch o
which were golden apples. Calling fo
silence he said, 'This Egyptian, if h
conquer her, shall kill her with th
sword, but if she conquer him she sha
receive this branch.' And he went awa
And we approached each other, and bega
to exchange blows. He was trying t
catch me by the feet, but I was strikin
his face with my heels. And I was borr
aloft in the air, and began to strike hi
as though I were not treading upon th
ground. But when I saw we were wastin
time I joined my hands and interlocke
my fingers. Then I caught him by th
head, and he fell on his face and
trampled on his head. And the peop
began to shout, and my assistants to sin
psalms. And I went up to the fencing
master and received the branch. And h
gave me a kiss, and said to me, 'Daughte
peace be with thee.' And I began to wa

with glory to the Sanavivarian gate.[1] Then I awoke and perceived that I was not to fight with beasts, but against the devil; but I knew that the victory would be mine.

"I have brought this narrative up to the day before the show. If anyone wishes, he may write what was done on the day itself."

XI. Moreover, also, the blessed Saturus related this vision of his which he himself committed to writing. "We had suffered," said he, "and had departed from the flesh, and we were beginning to be carried by four angels to the east,[2] and their

[1] A sort of Gate of Life, mentioned again in chapter xx. This was the way by which the victims, spared by the popular clemency, escaped from the amphitheatre. This stands in contrast to the "*porta Libitinensis*" through which the dead bodies of gladiators were carried on the "*libitina*." Compare Aelius Lampridus, *Life of Commodus Antoninus* xvi.

[2] It is probable that these are the four angels of the Presence (the Face-Angels). Cf. Isaiah lxiii, 9, who by a natural misunderstanding appear as four faces in the book of Enoch, where they are given as Michael, Rafael, Gabriel, and Fanuel. (Enoch xl).

hands touched us not. Now we were pro
ceeding, not turned on our backs an
moved from beneath, but as if we wer
climbing a gentle ascent. And when firs
set free from the world we saw a grea
light; and I said to Perpetua, who was b
my side, 'This is what the Lord pro
mised to us; we see His promise.' An
while we were being borne along by th
four angels, there was made for us
splendid open space like as it were
pleasure-garden, with rose-trees and a
kinds of flowers.

"The height of the trees was after th
manner of cypresses, whose leaves wer
singing[1] without ceasing. Now there in th

At the close of the first vision of Hermas t
woman who represents the Church is carried awa
as her chair had already been carried away, to t
east. She is taken by the arms by two men who a
afterwards described as angels. (Vis. i, 4, 3.)

[1] Codd. Casinensis and Compendiensis ha
"*cadebant*" (were falling) and the Greek versio
(κατεφέρετο), and Cod. Salisburgensis has "*ara
bant*" (were burning), but Dr. Robinson conside
that the united testimony of Codd. Casin. an
Compend. and the Greek version renders the latt

pleasure-garden those four angels were brighter than the rest;[1] and those who

reading impossible on textual grounds: he conjectures "*canebant*" (were singing) and refers to the passage in the *History of Barlaam and Josaphat* (Josaphat's vision): "the leaves of the trees made a tuneful sound." There would be nothing strange in this conception to the Eastern mind. It is used as a metaphor in the Old Testament, e.g. Chron. xvi, 33; Ps. xcvi, 12; Isa. xliv, 23, and Isa. xxxv, 1, 2. In the *Testament of Abraham* iii, as the angel Michael is going with Abraham to his house, we read: "And as they went as from the field toward his house; beside that way there stood a cypress tree, and by the command of the Lord the tree cried out with a human voice, saying, Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord God that calls Himself to those that love Him." In the latter part of this vision, Saturus evidently is influenced partly by the Apocalypse of S. John and partly by liturgical formulæ. Dr. Robinson, in *Texts and Studies*, i, 2, p. 39 (to whom I am indebted for the above references), says, "it is quite possible that in the original source the Ter Sanctus was actually the song of the trees of Paradise, though he has reserved it for the angelic hosts. If this be the case, possibly we may find here some clue to the extraordinary phrase in Jeremiah's prayer in 'the Rest of the Words of Baruch' ix: He began to pray, saying, Holy, Holy, Holy, the fragrant offering of the living trees."

[1] As to their being more glorious than the rest, we may compare this with 2 Pet. ii, 11.

saw us there gave us honour, and said t
the other angels, 'Here they are, her
they are!' with wonder. And those fou
angels who carried us shuddered and pu
us down. And we passed over on foot th
space of a furlong in a broad path studde
with violets, where we found Jocundu
and Saturninus and Artaxius, who wer
burnt alive in the same persecution, an
Quintus, who had as a martyr died i
prison; and we were asking them when
they were, when the other angels said t
us, 'Come first and enter, and salute th
Lord.'

XII. "And we approached a place, th
walls of which were as though they wer
built of light, and before the door fou
angels were stationed, who robed thos
entering with white garments. And w
entered and heard a chorus of voice
saying incessantly, 'Holy, holy, holy.'[1]

[1] Lat. *Agios*, *Agios*, *Agios*. For the survival of th
Greek form of the *Ter Sanctus*, cf. S. Germain c
Paris (†576 A.D.), *Ep.* i. Both forms are also foun
in the Mozarabic Liturgy.

And we saw in that place as it were an old man sitting, with snowy white hair but a youthful countenance,[1] whose feet we saw not. And on his right hand and on his left four elders; and behind them many more elders were standing.[2] And entering in with wonder we stood before the throne. And the four angels raised us up, and we kissed him, and with his own hand he passed across our face.[3] And the rest of the elders said to us, 'Let us stand.' And we stood and gave the sign of peace. And they said to us, 'Go and play.'[4] And I said to Perpetua, 'You have

[1] We may compare with this the *Epistle to Diognetus* xi, 4: "This Word Who was from the beginning, who appeared as new and yet was proved to be old."

[2] This passage may be compared with the "six men who presided over the Building, and walked with Him on the right and on the left," while there were "many other glorious ones round about Him." (Herm. Sim. ix, 6, 2).

[3] Dr. Robinson suggests that this difficult phrase may be interpreted in the light of Rev. vii, 17.

[4] A parallel incident is found in the Shepherd of Hermas. Hermas is left by the Shepherd under the care of the maidens. They treat him as their

your desire'; and she said to me
'Thanks be to God, that, however happ
I was in the flesh, I am happier here now'

XIII. "And we went forth, and we sa
before the gates Optatus the bishop o
the right hand, and Aspasius the pres
byter, a teacher,[1] on the left hand, separate
and sad. And they threw themselves a
our feet and said, 'Restore peace be
tween us; for you have gone and hav
left us thus.' And we said to them, 'A
not thou our father, and thou our pres
byter? Why do you throw yourselves a
our feet?' And we were distressed an
embraced them. And Perpetua began t
talk with them in Greek; and we dre

brother. Sim. ix, 11: "And she who seemed to
the first of them began to kiss me; and the othe
seeing her kissing me began to kiss me also, and
go round about the Tower and to play with m
And I became, as it were, a young man, and beg
myself to play with them."

[1] The teaching presbyters were a distinct cl
of presbyters—all not being teachers, and the
were to be judges of the fitness of such as were
be teachers of the hearers. See Cyprian, *Epis*
xxiii.

them aside into the pleasure-garden under a rose-tree. And while we were talking with them the angels said to them, 'Let them alone, that they may refresh themselves; and if you have any differences, forgive one another.' And they put them to confusion. And they said to Optatus,[1] 'Correct thy flock; because they come to thy assemblies as if returning from the circus and contending about the factions.'[2] And it seemed to us as though they wished to shut the gates; and we began to recognize there many brethren, and also martyrs. We were all being nourished with an indescribable odour which sustained us. Then I joyously awoke."

XIV. The above were the very remarkable visions of these most blessed martyrs

[1] Optatus may have been Bishop of Carthage. See S. A. Morcelli, *Africa Christiana*, 1816, ii, 54.

[2] Factions is the technical term for the rival parties in the chariot races. See Gibbon, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. Ed J. B. Bury, chap. xl, 2, vol. iv, 234.

Saturus and Perpetua which they themselves wrote down. But God called away Secundulus while still in prison by an earlier departure from this world, not without favour, so that he escaped the beasts; yet certainly his body, though not his soul, knew the sword.[1]

XV. But respecting Felicitas (for to her also the Lord's favour approached in the same way), when she had already gone eight months with child (for she had been pregnant when she was arrested), as the day of the exhibition was drawing near she was in great grief lest on account of her pregnancy she should be delayed—because pregnant women are not allowed to be publicly punished—and lest she should shed her sacred and guiltless blood among some who had been wicked subsequently. Moreover, her fellow martyrs were painfully saddened lest they should leave so excellent a friend and

[1] He may have been beheaded in the prison; or "the sword" may be a figure of speech for the sufferings which caused his death.

companion alone in the path of the same hope. Therefore, joining together their united cry, they poured forth their prayer to the Lord three days before the exhibition. Immediately after their prayer her pains came upon her; and when, with the difficulty natural to an eight months' delivery in the labour of bringing forth she was sorrowing, a certain one of the servants of the Cataractarii[1] said to her, "You who are in such suffering now, what will you do when you are thrown to the beasts, which you despised when you refused to sacrifice?" And she replied, "Now it is I that suffer what I suffer; but then there will be another by my side who will suffer for me, because I shall be suffering for Him." Thus she brought forth a little girl, which a certain sister brought up as her daughter.

XVI. Since then the Holy Spirit per-

[1] *Cataracta* seems to be a portcullis in Livy xxvii, 28. In Jeremiah xx, 2, 3, it is the Septuagint word for "the stocks." Here it may be taken as a technical name for a prison official.

mitted, and by permitting willed, that the proceedings of that exhibition should be written down, although we are unworthy to complete the description of so great a glory, yet we obey as it were the command of the most blessed Perpetua, nay her sacred trust, and add one more testimony concerning her constancy and her loftiness of mind. When they were being treated with more severity by the tribune, because from the intimations of deceitful men, he feared lest they should be withdrawn from the prison by some sort of magic incantations; Perpetua answered to his face, and said, "Why do you not at least permit us to be refreshed, being as we are objectionable to the most noble Cæsar, and having to fight on his birthday? Or is it not your glory if we are brought forward fatter on that occasion?" The tribune shuddered and blushed, and commanded that they should be kept with more consideration, so that permission was given to their brethren and

others to go in and be refreshed with them; even the keeper of the prison trusting them now himself.

XVII. Moreover, on the day before, when in that last meal, which they call the free meal, they were partaking as far as they could, not of a free supper, but of an "agape";[1] with the same firmness they were uttering such words as these to the people, denouncing against them the judgment of the Lord, bearing witness to the felicity of their passion, laughing at the curiosity of the people who came together; while Saturus said, "To-mor-

[1] The Agape, or Love-feast, was a common meal at which the early Christians met together in token of love and brotherly kindness. It was an ordinary meal of a quasi-religious character. In S. Paul's time, A.D. 57-8, the Eucharist and the Agape were closely connected, the latter apparently preceding the former. This is an inference from Acts xx, 7; and still more from the profane and scandalous behaviour condemned by S. Paul in 1 Cor. xi, 17-34. This gross scandal caused in the Corinthian Church led to their very early severance. Tertullian gives a fine description of the Agape in the *Apology* xxxix.

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row is not enough for you, for you to behold with pleasure that which you hate. Friends to-day, enemies to-morrow. Yet note our faces diligently, that you may recognize them on that day of judgment." Thus all departed thence astonished, and of these many believed.

XVIII. The day of their victory dawned and they went forth from the prison into the amphitheatre as if to heaven—joyful and with radiant countenances, trembling, if at all, with joy, not with fear. Perpetua followed with bright step as a bride of Christ, as the darling of God with the flash of her eyes quelling the gaze of the populace. Felicitas, likewise rejoicing that she had been safely delivered, so that she could fight with the beasts, passed from one effusion of blood to another, from the midwife to the gladiator, about to be washed after childbirth with a second baptism. And when they were brought to the gate, and were

being compelled to put on costumes,[1] the men that of the priests of Saturn, and the women that of devotees of Ceres,[2] her

[1] It was apparently not an uncommon thing to make the Christians represent some mythological character, or to engage in some idolatrous ceremony. Thus Clement, in *Ep. ad Corinth* I, *cap.* vi, speaks of Christian women who played the part of Danaeus or Dirce in the arena, under Nero. In the *Acts of Theodotus* xv we have an instance of persons who were made priests of Diana and Minerva.

[2] We learn from Tertullian, in his works, *De Pallio* iv and *De Testimonio Animae* ii, that the men would have been dressed in a tunic broadly striped with purple and a scarlet cloak, while the women would have worn an all-white dress and the distinction of a fillet and the privilege of a helmet. The allusion made in the *Passion of S. Perpetua* to the worship of Saturn and Ceres is in harmony with the evidence of inscriptions which make them to be amongst the most popular in African deities. The African references to the priesthood attached to the worship of Saturn and Ceres are numerous. Nine inscriptions commemorate priests of Ceres, and of these seven are women: over thirty inscriptions record the names of priests of Saturn. No other form of African worship is so well represented by memorials of its officials as these are. The whole number of Ceres inscriptions is about twenty, of Saturn one hundred and five. Not even Jupiter is so frequent as this last. Temples of Ceres are noted by the inscriptions at Agbia in Proconsular Africa,

magnificent firmness up to the last fought against this disgrace; for she said, "We have so far come to this willingly, lest our liberty should be taken away; we have pledged our life that we will do no such thing; this is the very bargain we have made with you." Injustice recognized justice: the tribune allowed them to be led in simply in whatever attire they were. Perpetua sang a psalm, already trampling on the head of the Egyptian.[1] Revocatus and Saturninus and Saturus uttered warning threats to the spectators on this fashion; when they came within sight of Hilarian they began with gestures and nods to say to him, "You may judge us, but God will judge you." This infuriated the people, and they demanded that they should be punished with scourges in

and at Thevaste in Numidia; at Sitifis, in Mauritania, inscriptions have been found in honour both of Saturn and Ceres. (*Corp. Inscr. Lat.* vol. viii, 8,442-8,450.)

[1] This, of course, refers to the incident in her vision, chap. x.

front of the line of beast-fighters.[1] And they only rejoiced, because they had attained to something even of the Lord's sufferings.

XIX. Now He who had said "Ask and ye shall receive," had granted to these petitioners the particular death which each one had desired. For sometimes when they used to converse together concerning their wish for martyrdom, Saturninus professed that he wished to be thrown to all the beasts, that so he might obtain a more glorious crown. And so, being called at the beginning of the show, he measured his strength with a leopard, and being placed upon the platform was harassed by a bear. Now Saturus deprecated suffering from a bear more than anything; but he had already made up his

[1] The beast-fighters were men drawn up in a row to scourge them as they passed along—a punishment similar to what is called "running the gauntlet." Thus Tertullian (*Ad Martyres* v): "Others have run the gauntlet of the beast-fighters' whips with most enduring shoulders." Cf. also *Ad Nationes* i, 18.

mind that he would perish by one bite from a leopard. Consequently, when he was exposed to a wild boar, the professional fighter who had tied him to the beast[1] was pierced instead, and died soon after the show was over. Saturus was only dragged about. And when he was tied up to the bear on the bridge, the bear refused to come out of his cell; and so a second time Saturus was called back unhurt.

XX. Now for the young women the devil prepared a very savage cow, infuriated for that purpose beyond what was customary, wishing to rival their sex with that of the beast. And so they were brought forth, stripped and enclosed in nets. The crowd shuddered, seeing one, a delicate girl, and the other fresh from child-bed with dripping breasts. In such plight they

[1] The martyr was attached by a rope to the wild beast, before it was loosed from its den, in order that he might not escape. This explains why in some of the more famous martyrdoms the saints have pulled the beast towards them, e.g. Eusebius *Hist. Eccl.* viii, 7, and *Smyrn. Ep.* 3 (the Martyrdom of S. Polycarp).

were called back and clothed with loose garments. Perpetua was tossed first and fell on her loins, and sitting up she drew back the tunic, which had been torn from her side, to cover her thigh, mindful of her modesty rather than of her sufferings. Then she was called for again, and bound up her dishevelled hair; for it was not becoming for a martyr to suffer with dishevelled hair, lest she should seem to be mourning in her glory. So she arose, and when she saw Felicitas tossed, she approached her and gave her her hand and lifted her up. And both of them stood together; and the brutality of the populace being appeased, they were called back to the Sanavivarian gate. Then Perpetua was received by a certain catechumen, Rusticus by name, who kept close to her, and she, as if aroused from sleep (so deeply had she been in the Spirit and in an ecstasy), began to look round, and to the amazement of all, said, " I cannot tell when we are going to be led forth to that

cow." And when she had heard that it had already happened she did not at first believe it, until she saw certain marks of the injury on her body[1] and her dress. Then, having sent for her brother, she addressed him and the catechumen, saying, " Stand fast in the faith, and love one another, all of you, and be not offended at our sufferings."

XXI. Likewise Saturus at another entrance was exhorting Pudens the adjutant, saying, " Assuredly here I am, as I expected and foretold. I have up to now felt no beast. And now believe with your whole heart. Lo, I am going forth thither and by one bite of the leopard I shall be destroyed." And immediately, at the conclusion of the show, when a leopard[2] was let loose, Saturus poured forth from one

[1] S. Blandina, at Lyons, in 177 A.D., in a like trial, was unconscious of any pain, but in her experience it was a bull that played pitch and toss. See Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.* v, 1.

[2] It is curious that the Shorter Latin Acts state that Saturus and Perpetua were devoured by lions.

bite so great a quantity of blood that the people shouted out to him as he turned round what amounted to a testimony to his second baptism, " Well washed; well washed!"[1] Then he said to Pudens: " Farewell: remember me and my faith; and let not these things trouble you, but strengthen you." At the same time he took from his finger a small ring,[2] and having dipped it in his wound, gave it back to him for a keepsake, as a pledge

[1] Lat. *Saluum lotum*, *saluum lotum* is a phrase of the baths. Aubé remarks that it is quite possible that no one except the author of the Acts saw an allusion to Christian baptism (much less to the Montanistic idea of Martyrdom as a second baptism) in the cry of the populace. These words are found in an inscription which gives us the mosaic of an ancient bath pavement. (*Corp. Inscr. Lat.* vol. v, 4,500.)

[2] The prison officials (*optiones*) of the legion all wore rings: thus in *Corp. Inscr. Lat.* vol. viii, 2,554, there is an inscription from the camp at Lambaesis with the formation of a college, and the foundation of a schola of the *optiones* of one of the legions: there are sixty of these *optiones* corresponding to the sixty centurions: the concluding part of the inscription decrees that all the discharged veterans shall receive a ring on the Kalends of January (January 1st).

and memorial of his sufferings. And then already half dead, he is laid along with the others in the usual place for the throat-cutting. And when the people demanded that they should be brought into the midst in order that they might feast their eyes on the sight of the sword piercing their bodies, they voluntarily rose up and transferred themselves whither the crowd wished. They had already before this mutually exchanged the kiss, in order to complete the martyrdom by the solemn rite of peace.[1] The

[1] The kiss of peace is not given in the midst of the amphitheatre, as the Greek version implies and as the writer of the *Thuburbitan Acts* makes his martyrs give it. (Dr. Robinson, *Texts and Studies* i, 2, note p. 93.) Other instances of the kiss of peace given at martyrdom may be found in the account of the Gallican martyrs, *Ep. of the Gallican Churches* (Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.* v, 2), and in the *Acts of SS. Montanus, Lucius* xxiii (suffered martyrdom at Carthage, Feb. 24th, 259 A.D). The Holy Eucharist is the Christian rite with which the kiss of peace was most essentially connected, and in which it was preserved the longest: it is found in all primitive Liturgies. Tertullian mentions it in his treatise, *De Oratione* xviii: he calls it the " seal of prayer." S

rest indeed, immovable and in silence, received the sword. Saturus, as was natural, since he had first climbed the ladder, was the first to give up his spirit; for he was waiting for Perpetua. But she in order to taste something of sorrow, being pierced between the ribs, cried out loudly, and she herself placed the wavering right hand of the youthful gladiator to her throat. Perchance so noble a woman, who was feared by the unclean spirit, could not have otherwise been put to death unless she herself had wished it.

O most brave and blessed martyrs! O truly called and elect for the glory of our

Augustine in his work, *De Amicitia* vi, refers to it as being given just before the Communion. S. Cyprian, *Ep.* lxiii, 4, tells us that it was given in baptism. Apparently, according to the *Apostolic Constitutions* viii, 5, it was given at Ordination. Tertullian, *De Virginibus Velandis* xi, mentions the kiss at marriage as an old heathen custom, but he does not expressly say whether it was retained or not in the Christian marriage ceremonial of his day. See further, Cabrol, *Dict. d'Archéologie Chrétienne et de liturgie* ii, 117-130, and *Dictionary of Christian Antiquities* ii, 902-906.

Lord Jesus Christ![1] Whom whoever mag
nifies, and honours, and adores, surel
ought to read these examples for th
edification of the Church, not less tha
the ancient ones, so that new powers als
may testify that one and the ever sam
Holy Spirit is always working even unti
now, and Almighty God the Father, an
His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom
be glory and infinite power for ever an
ever. Amen.

[1] Compare also the Preface. The glory of th
Lord is regarded as the great end of martyrdoms
and is set forward by their public recital in th
Church. When Tertullian discusses Flight in Per
secution, the great end of persecution is found to b
" the glory of God."

De Fuga in Persecutione i: " The one great thin
in persecution is the promotion of the glory of God
as He tries and casts away, lays on and takes off."
Chap. ix: " Seek not to die on bridal beds, nor i
miscarriages, nor in soft fevers, but to die th
martyr's death, that He may be glorified Who ha
suffered for you." *Epistle of the Gallican Churches*
" Those whom the Lord willed thus to depart
showing forth His glory." Again, " And Christ wa
greatly glorified in the case of those who had pre
viously denied Him but now confessed Him."

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